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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000814

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SUBJECT: UNSC ADOPTS PRST CONDEMNING DARFUR ATTACK

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for Reasons 1.4 B/D.

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The Security Council adopted a presidential statement condemning the September 29 killing of 10 AMIS peacekeepers at a camp near Haskanita, South Darfur (please see paragraph 6 for PRST text). The PRST adoption followed two days of heated Security Council debate on October 1 and 2 in which Russia, South Africa and Qatar led an effort to insert unacceptable language into the text. END SUMMARY.

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Round 1  
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¶2. (U) The Security Council held two sessions October 1 and 2 to consider a response to the September 29 attack on an AMIS camp near Haskanita, South Darfur that left 10 peacekeepers dead. On October 1, DPKO U/SYG Guehenno delivered a short factual briefing on the Haskanita attack, which began at in the evening on September 29. The perpetrators returned again a few hours later and overran the camp, looting significant quantities of material and weapons. Guehenno said that 10 AMIS peacekeepers had been killed (7 Nigerian, 1 Bostwana, 1 Malawian, 1 Senegalese). In addition, 14 peacekeepers were injured and another 6 were unaccounted for. Guehenno declined to assign blame for the attack to any specific group, but said the UN and AU had agreed to dispatch a joint investigation team to Darfur. Guehenno argued that the attack demonstrated the need for a UN/AU force with robust capabilities, noting that AMIS had been unable to deploy reinforcements or evacuate its forces following the first attack because of a lack of aviation assets and ongoing Sudanese air restrictions.

¶3. (U) Following Guehenno's briefing, the Security Council took up consideration of a press statement condemning the attacks. Movement towards a consensus text faltered after Russia, South Africa and Qatar insisted on describing the attacks as a "terrorist" act and assigning blame to "rebel" elements. Russian PermRep Churkin left the room abruptly after Ghana distributed a new draft of the text that did not include his suggested edits, demanding that the attack be described as a "terrorist" attack carried out by "rebel groups." "If these two elements are not included, we prefer no statement at all," Churkin said. Russian D/PermRep Dolgov remained, but with no flexibility to negotiate. Following two hours of unproductive discussion and Russian intransigence, delegations agreed to take up a Council response the following day in the form of presidential statement.

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Round 2  
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¶4. (C) Council debate on October 2 focused exclusively on whether to condemn the attacks as a "terrorist" attack and assign blame to rebel groups. Russia, South Africa and Qatar led the push to include a reference to terrorism and rebel forces. (NOTE: The PRC Sudan expert told Poloff that his delegation had not participated actively in either Council session because his delegation had not received instructions in time. END NOTE.) Russia and South Africa repeatedly referenced media reports that UN Special Envoy Jan Eliasson and UN/AU SRSR Rodolphe Adada believed rebels were behind the attack to support their position. In response to objections from France and the UK, South Africa began to soften its position and the word "terrorist" was excised from the text. After that, Russian PermRep Churkin dug in and rejected all additional formulations proposed by the U.S., UK, France, Slovakia and Belgium to deal with responsibility for the attack. D/PermRep Dolgov eventually accepted a proposal which retained a reference to "a rebel group" as a possible perpetrator, but drafted to make clear that the Security Council had not drawn that conclusion.

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Finalized Text  
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¶5. (C) Presidential Statement on the Haskanita attack as adopted by the Security Council on October 2:

The Security Council was briefed on 1 October on the recent attack on African Union peacekeepers in Haskanita, South Darfur, Sudan, reportedly committed by a rebel group. The Council condemns this murderous attack and demands that no effort be spared so that the perpetrators be identified and brought to justice.

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The Security Council deplores the loss of life and injuries that resulted from this attack, and conveys its sympathy to the governments, families and colleagues of those killed and injured.

The Security Council reiterates its support for the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and commends the dedication of its personnel and expresses its appreciation for those countries which contribute troops to AMIS.

The Security Council recalls the demand in resolution 1769 (2007) on all parties for an immediate cessation of hostilities and attacks on AMIS, civilians and humanitarian agencies. The Council insists that all parties in the Sudan comply with this demand and cooperate fully with the deployment of the United Nations Light and Heavy Support Packages to AMIS, and with UNAMID.

The Security Council deplores the fact that this attack took place on the eve of the peace talks starting on 27 October in Tripoli, under the chairmanship of the United Nations and the African Union. The Council underlines that any attempt to undermine the peace process is unacceptable.

KHALILZAD